Q signals as used by Amateur Radio

Q signals are 3 letter words sometimes followed by text or numbers. They are used extensively on CW because they pack a wallop, saving much time and effort. With the advent of the no-code license and the widespread use of FM voice, newbies who are not familiar with Q signals hold to the notion that Q signals on voice is inappropriate, are in bad taste, or are an elitist code. Since they don't know it, don't want to learn it, and find it a bit intimidating when someone expects them to know it, such is an understandable position,

Other operators who understand its meaning and value, stick to it. That is also understandable. As long as Q signals are not used in a disparaging manner or mere jargon known exclusively by "in-crowd" elitists, it does not create any harm. KaroEcho, as a policy, does not mandate its use, but recognizes its value when both stations know the Q signals.

Useful and commonly used Q signals are QSY, QTH, and QRZ.

For traffic handling on CW we use the well-established QN signals. Please use these equivalents on voice for more efficient traffic handling. We can appreciate the efficiency and usefulness of the following QN signals can be.

Q sigs when sent without a question mark is a statement or directive. When followed by a question mark it is a request or question.

Asterisks indicates for Net Control Station (NCS) use only

QNA* Answer in prearranged order.
QNB* Act as relay Between _____ and _____.
QNC All net stations please Copy. I have a message for all net stations.
QND* Net is Directed (controlled by net control station). This is a directed net.
QNE* Entire net stand by.
QNF Net is Free (not controlled).
QNG Take over as net control station.
QNH Your net frequency is High.
QNI* Stations please report In*
QNJ Can you copy me?
QNK* Transmit messages for _____to _____.
QNL Your net frequency is Low.
QNM* You are QRMing the net. Stand by.
QNN Net control station is _____. Who is net control?
QNO Station is leaving the net after being excused (QNX)
QNP Unable to copy you. Unable to copy _____.
QNQ* Move frequency to _____ and wait for _____ to finish handling traffic. Then send him traffic for _____.
QNR* Answer _____ and Receive traffic.

QNS Following Stations are in the net.* (Follow with list). Request list of stations in net. [QNS is very useful when changing NCS as in QNG]

QNT I request permission to leave the net for _____ minutes.

QNU* The net has traffic for you. Stand by.

QNV* Establish contact with _____ on this frequency. If successful, move to and send him traffic for_____.

QNW How do I route messages for _____?

QNX: You are excused from the net. Can I be excused from the net?

QNY* Shift to another frequency to clear traffic with ___.

Example: W1AW W1BDY QNY UP 15 Newington. Or W6ECK K6KOP 146.4550 KEN3

QNZ Zero beat your signal with mine.

Following are the commonly used (not meant to be comprehensive) list ham radio Q signals

QRA: What is the name or call sign of your station? Please identify yourself. The name or call sign of my station is ... Suggestion, use QRZ? instead

QRK: What is the readability of my signals (or those of ...)? The readability of your signals is (on a scale of 1 to 5). For hams this is the "R" in RST.

QRL: This frequency is being used. Is this frequency being used?

QRM: There are station(s) crowding out and interfering with your signal

QRN: I am troubled by static and/or atmospherics.

QRO: Please increase power. I am running high power.

QRP: I am running low power. Shall I decrease power?

QRQ: Send faster. Shall I send faster? Faster.

QRS: Send more slowly. Shall I send more slowly? Slower.

QRT: Please stop sending. I have stopped sending and am finished and that was my last transmission. I have nothing more.

QRU: I have no traffic. Note that QTC is the opposite meaning "I have traffic".

QRV: I am ready to copy. Are you ready to copy?

QRX: Standby. I will call you again for .... minutes or at _____hours on _____kHz. When will you call me again?

QRZ: Who is calling me? You are being called by _____ .

QSA: What is the strength of my signals? The strength of your signals is .... Hams use a scale of 1-9 (s units). This is the "S" in RST.

QSB: Your signals are fading in and out (wavering). Are my signals fading?

QSG: Shall I send ... telegrams (messages) at a time? Send ... messages ...... at a time. I will send all messages without a break unless you break-in (see QSK)

QSK: I can hear you between signals; You can break in on my transmission at any time. Can you hear me between your signals?

QSL: I acknowledge receipt of your message. Please can you acknowledge receipt?

QSM: Repeat the last message which you sent

QSO: Contact. Make contact with ... Can we communicate now?

QSP: I can relay for/to _____. Can you relay for/to _____?

QST: General call preceding a message/bulletin addressed to all amateurs and ARRL members.

QSV: Please send the letter V ten times for a signal test. I will repeat V as a series for testing.

QSY: Moving to another frequency. Please move to _____kHz. Shall I change to transmission on another frequency (or on _____kHz)

QSZ: Please send all words twice. Shall I send all words twice? This used during extremely bad conditions (Q2-Q3) for important messages where there are no relays available.

QTA: Please cancel message number ___ .

QTB: I do not agree with your word count (check). Please repeat the first letter or digit of each word or group or I will repeat the first letter or digit of each word or group.

QTC: I have _____messages for you or for _____ . How many messages have you and what are their destinations/routing?

QTH: My location is _____.   What is your location?

QTV: I will guard this frequency. Please guard this frequency. Stand guard for me on frequency of ... mHz from ... to ... hours

QTX: I will keep my station open for further communication with you here until further notice (or until ...hours).

Note that QNQ, QNR, **QNV, QNY**, QRV, QTC, QSP, and QTB are in particular very relevant for traffic handling.

Handling Instructions and Operator's Note

Handling instructions (HX) are used to convey special instructions to handling and delivering operators. With the advent of free nationwide calling and the internet, many of the handling instructions have become anachronistic.

When used, it is inserted in the message preamble between the precedence and the station of origin. Its use is optional with the originating station, but once inserted is mandatory with all relaying stations. When not used the field is demarcated by xx.

The HX field is used as a shortcut for an **operators note**. When an operators note is deemed necessary (rare) that is not already covered in HXA through HXG), it is **inserted after the signature of the message** and not counted in the word count (check). Example: "Operators note," *this message was received apparently garbled but confirmed by the sending station. The word count has been corrected to 14"*.

Keep Op Notes concise.

HXA (May be followed by a number) Collect landline delivery authorized by addressee within X miles. (if no number, authorization is unlimited.)

HXB (Followed by a number.) Cancel message if not delivered within X hours of filing time; service originating station.

HXC Report date and time of delivery to originating station.

HXD Report to originating station the identity of station from which received, plus date and time. Report identity of station to which relayed, plus date and time, or if delivered report date, time, and method of delivery.

HXE Delivering station get reply from addressee, originate message back.

HXF (Followed by number.) Hold delivery until a specified date.

HXG Delivery by mail or landline toll call not required. If toll or other expense involved, cancel message and service originating station.

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